

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1317

April 30, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

I am requesting funding for a Youth Equity Clinic in fiscal year 2022.

The entity to receive funding for this project is the YMCA of Rock River Valley, located at 220 E State St. Rockford, IL 61104.

The funding would be used to introduce programming focused on breaking the cycle of poverty and addressing social determinants of health by opening a Youth Equity Center. This center would address food insecurity & anti-hunger, support college & career readiness, increase child & family stability, promote healthy lifestyles, and increase social responsibility. The building will require some upgrades, including an updated kitchen, a fitness center and gymnasium, a music studio and a remodeled multi-purpose room. Programming includes a nutritional director, program staffing, and physical and mental health services, an after-school and a weekend and summer program, all designed to keep youth engaged and receiving the services that can help them build the necessary social determinants of health to be successful.

This project provides a unique opportunity to address systemic and structural issues that negatively impact our youth. The community of Rockford is faced with the "fierce urgency of now" with more than 50% of students in Rockford Public Schools District 205 failing and middle school students facing the most significant challenges in their education and experiencing the highest failure rate. RPS 205 has a 66% Graduation Rate compared to an 86% national average. Additionally, our community has seen a 100% increase in youth crime from 2019 to 2020.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.

Respectfully,



Cheri Bustos
Member of Congress
April 30, 2021